



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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May 15, 1998

**COMMON CARRIER BUREAU ANNOUNCES AGENDA
FOR A FORUM ADDRESSING
COMBINATIONS OF UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENTS**

The Common Carrier Bureau will host a public forum to discuss the methods by which the Bell operating companies (BOCs) may satisfy the section 271 requirement that they provide nondiscriminatory access to unbundled network elements in a manner that allows competing carriers to combine such elements.

Various members of the telecommunications industry have proposed methods by which competing carriers can combine network elements, including physical and virtual collocation, direct access to the BOC's network, electronic methods of combining network elements, and BOC provision of combined network elements for a separate charge. This Forum will permit representatives from different segments of the telecommunications industry to address the legal, technical, and economic issues with respect to each of the proposed methods. Interested parties are invited to submit questions for discussion at the Forum.

Date: Thursday, June 4, 1998

Location: Commission Meeting Room
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554

Time: 9:30am - 4:15pm

The agenda for the Forum is attached to this Notice. Panels may be modified subject to the availability of participants. The Common Carrier Bureau will post the agenda, and any subsequent changes, on the Commission's website at www.fcc.gov. The Common Carrier Bureau will also issue an amended agenda upon confirmation of the panelists. For information

on obtaining a videotape of the forum, please contact the Commission's Audio-Visual Office at (202) 418-0460.

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For additional information contact: Jordan Goldstein, Jake Jennings, or Katherine Schroder at (202) 418-1580.

**COMMON CARRIER BUREAU FORUM:
COMBINATIONS OF UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENTS**

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 1998

AGENDA

9:30 - 9:35 Introductory Remarks

9:35 - 10:00 Panel One: The Importance of Combinations of Network Elements

A brief presentation by members of the industry with respect to whether and how they intend to use combinations of network elements as an entry strategy.
A discussion of whether combinations of network elements facilitate the development of competition in the local market.

10:00 - 10:30 Panel Two: A Technical Overview of Methods for Combining Network Elements

A review of the various forms of collocation.
A brief presentation on the development and availability of electronic methods for combining network elements.

10:30 - 10:45 Break

10:45 - 12:00 Panel Three: Collocation -- Legal, Economic, and Technical Issues

Is collocation the only method for combining network elements authorized by the statute?
How does a BOC demonstrate that its collocation offering satisfies the statute's nondiscrimination requirement and provides competitors with a meaningful opportunity to compete?
Is collocation consistent with the Eighth Circuit's holding that a competing provider may provide service entirely through the use of unbundled network elements (*i.e.*, what equipment must a competing provider supply in order to use combinations of network elements)?

12:00 - 1:30 Break for Lunch

1:30 - 3:00 Panel Four: Other Methods (*e.g.*, Direct Access, Electronic Methods, Combinations Provided by the BOC for a Separate Charge) -- Legal, Economic, and Technical Issues

Which of these methods are technically feasible?
If one or more of these methods are technically feasible, what is the BOC obligated to provide to satisfy checklist item (ii) in light of the Commission's rule in section 51.321 that an incumbent LEC must provide any technically feasible method of obtaining access to unbundled network elements?

Does the Eighth Circuit's decision require physical separation of network elements?

What are the network reliability and security concerns associated with direct access and electronic methods?

Do methods other than collocation (*e.g.*, direct access, electronic combination of elements) constitute an unauthorized taking under the Fifth Amendment?

How do these other methods satisfy the statute's nondiscrimination requirement and provide competitors with a meaningful opportunity to compete?

3:00 - 3:15 **Break**

3:15 - 4:15 **Panel Five: The State Perspective**

How are states ensuring that incumbent LECs provide CLECs access to unbundled network elements in a manner that allows them to be combined?

Are states imposing any requirements pursuant to state law?